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CLAIMS

1. A method of encouraging completion of electronic applications to institutions by making the process more sociable through the introduction during the form-completion process of an appropriate communication to the applicant from an individual associated with the institution, the method comprising:

presenting an application form over a computer network to the applicant, the application including at least one user-activateable hyperlink; and

upon activation of the hyperlink, displaying a communication to the applicant from an identified individual associated with the institution, thereby encouraging the applicant to complete the application by socializing the application process with a communication to the applicant from the identified individual.

2. The method of claim 1 in which the institution is a college or university and in which the identified individual is an enrolled student, faculty member, or alumnus associated with the institution.

3. The method of claim 1 in which the communication to the user describes the identified individual and provides the applicant a means to communicate to the identified individual after completing the form.

4. The method of claim 1 in which the communication includes a still or motion image of the identified individual.

5. The method of claim 1 in which the content of the communication to the user depends upon information entered into the form by the applicant.

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6. The method of claim 1 in which the content of the communication to the user is assembled in response to activating the hyperlink.

7. The method of claim 1 in which the communication includes information about how to contact the individual.

8. The method of claim 7 in which the individual cannot be contacted until the user completes the form.

9. A method for increasing the completion rate of electronic forms by introducing during the form-completion process an appropriate communication to a user from an individual associated with the institution to which the form is addressed, the method comprising:

associating with a location on an electronic form data specifying a communication to the user from a identified individual associated with the institution;

presenting the form over a computer network to the user; and

displaying the communication to the user upon the occurrence of an event during completion of the form, thereby encouraging the applicant to complete the form by socializing the forms completion process with communication to the user from an identified individual.

10. The method of claim 9 in which the communication to the user describes the identified individual and provides the applicant a means to communicate to the identified individual after completing the form.

11. The method of claim 9 in which the communication to the user includes a Web page presented in a pop-up window and describing the identified individual.

12. The method of claim 9 in which displaying the event includes following a hyperlink.

13. The method of claim 9 in which the data specifying a communication specifies which of multiple communications is presented to the applicant depending upon one or more values entered by the applicant into the form.

14. The method of claim 9 further comprising:
entering applicant information into the form; and
determining a communication to display using the data specifying the communication and the applicant information entered into the form.

15. A system for increasing the completion rate of electronic forms by introducing during the form-completion process an appropriate communication to a user from an individual associated with the institution to which the form is addressed, the system comprising:

a computer including a memory storing a program including instructions to:

associate with a location on an electronic form data specifying a communication to the user from a identified individual associated with the institution;

present the form over a computer network to the user; and

display the communication to the user upon the occurrence of an event during completion of the form, thereby encouraging the applicant to complete the form by socializing the forms completion process with communication to the user from an identified individual.

16. The system of claim 15 in which the communication to the user describes the identified individual and provides the applicant a means to communicate to the identified individual after completing the form.

17. The system of claim 15 in which the communication to the user includes a Web page presented in a pop-up window and describing the identified individual.

18. The system of claim 15 in which the event includes following a hyperlink.

19. The system of claim 15 in which the data specifying a communication specifies which of multiple communications is presented to the applicant depending upon one or more values entered by the applicant into the form.

20. The system of claim 15 in which the data specifying a communication specifies the construction of the communication from components.

21. A method of enhancing electronic forms provided by institutions for completion by users, the method comprising:

presenting an electronic form over a computer network to the user, the form including plural information fields and at least one user-activateable hyperlink that is activatable by the user after the user enters information into one or more predefined information fields of the form; and

upon activation of the hyperlink, displaying to the user customized information that is parametrically customized according to information in one or more of the predefined information fields of the form and that relates to the underlying purpose of the form.

22. The method of claim 21 in which the customized information includes a communication to the user from an identified individual associated with the institution.

23. The method of claim 21 in which the institution is a college or university and in which the form is a college admission form.

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24. The method of claim 21 in which the customized information does not relate to instructions for completing the form.

25. In a computer readable medium, software for enhancing electronic forms provided by institutions for completion by users, the medium comprising:

software for presenting an electronic form over a computer network to the user, the form including plural information fields and at least one user-activateable hyperlink that is activatable by the user after the user enters information into one or more predefined information fields of the form; and

software for displaying to the user upon activation of the hyperlink customized information that is parametrically customized according to information in one or more of the predefined information fields of the form and that relates to the underlying purpose of the form.

26. The medium of claim 25 in which the customized information includes a communication to the user from an identified individual associated with the institution.

27. The medium of claim 25 in which the institution is a college or university and in which the form is a college admission form.

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Handwritten signature/initials.